

## Message Text

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10/67

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03

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CPR-02 RSR-01 /084 W

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R 282310 Z APR 73 ZDK

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3480

CONFIDENTIAL TOKYO 5246

CORRECTED COPY (TEXT)

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL VISIT TO JAPAN

REF: STATE 79501

1. IN LIGHT HALLORAN ARTICLE IN NEW YORK TIMES, WHICH CARRIED BY SEVERAL JAPANESE NEWSPAPERS APRIL 27, EMBASSY REQUESTED FOREIGN OFFICE PGOVIDE TRANSCRIPT OF FOREIGN MINISTZR OHIRAS REMARKS ON QUESTION OF PRESIDENTIAL VISIT AT APRIL 26 BRIEFING FOR FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS. FOLLOWING TRANSCRIPT TAKEN FROM TAPED RECORD OF INTERVIEW.

2. BEGIN TEXT: Q. UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, THE QUESTION OF THE EMPEROR'S VISIT IS TIED UP WITH OR CONNECTED TO THE VISIT OF AN AMERICAN PRESIDENT TO JAPAN. IF I CAN GOHBACK TO MR. SATO'S ADMINISTRATION, HE HAS SAID THAT A PRESIDENT WOULD NOT VISIT JAPAN UNTIL THE EMPEROR HAD PAID HIS RESPECTS TO THE UNITED STATES, AND IT WAS FROM THAT VIEWPOINT THAT AN AMERICAN PRESIDENT WHO, I THINK, WANTED TO COME TO JAPAN HAD OFFERED AN INVITATION TO THE EMPEROR. NOW THAT THE EMPEROR'S  
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VISIT IS WITHER POSTPONED OR CANCELLED, WHAT HAPPENS TO

A POSSIBLE VISIT BY A PRESIDENT? DO WE STILL HAVE TOO WAIT UNTIL THE EMPEROR..... THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT DECIDES TO SEND THE EMPEROR TO THE US? A. LET ME SAY THAT IF THE PRESIDENT OF THE US EXPRESSES HIS SPECIFIC WISH TO VISIT JAPAN AND NOTIFIES US ACCORDINGLY, WE WILL BE MOST HAPPY TO WELCOME HIM. Q. I WOULD LIKE TO RETURN TO QUESTION OF AN INVITATION TO MR. NIXON. WHY IS JAPANESE GOVERNMENT SO LUKEWARM IN ACTUALLY TENDING AN INVITATION TO AN AMERICAN PRESIDENT? YOU INVITED MR. CHOU EN LAI, FOR INSTANCE, AT THE FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH HIM. WOULD YOU ACCEPT MR. NIXON'S VISIT IF HE ASKED TO COME? A. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF FLOWS OF WHAT WE CALL THE QTE CONSTANT DIALOGUE UNQTE BETWEEN JAPAN AND THE US. DIALOGUE IS TAKING PLACE AT ALL LEVELS AND VZRY CONSTANTLY. AND GIVEN THIS SITUATION, WE FEEL THAT WE DON'T NECESSARILY HAVE TO TRY TO DEAL WITH EVERYTHING IN AN EXCESSIVELY FORMALISTIC MANNER. WE CAN SOUND EACH OTHER OUT IN THIS CONSTANT FLOW OF DIALOGUE AND IF WE FIND THAT BOTH SIDES ARE AGREEABLE TO SOMETHING, THEN WE TRY TO FORMALIZE IT AND COME TO A FORMAL AGREEMENT. SO, IN SHORT, HWE ARE NOT TOO MUCH CONCERNED WITH TAKING A PURELY FORMALISTIC APPROACH IN ALL THIS AND THE POINT THAT WAS RAISED IN THE QUESTION IS REALLY NOT ANYTHING MORE THAN THIS. Q. MR. MINISTER, IF THAT IS TRUE, WHY, WHILE BOTH SIDES HAVE NOT YET AGREED ON THE DATE, HAS THE US EXTENDED A FORMAL INVITATION TO MR. TANAKA TO VISIT WASHINGTON? A. THIS IS ANOTHER THING THAT HAS COME UP IN THE FLOW OF THE CONSTANT DIALOGUE THAT I'VE TALKED ABOUT. IT'S NOT ALL THAT FORMAL IN NATURE. END TEXT.

". COMMENT: FOREIGN OFFICE, AND PROBABLY OHIRA HIMSELF, EVIDENTLY DISMAYED BY HALLORAN ARTICLE. AMERICAN AFFAIRS DIRGEN OKAWARA STATED EMPHATICALLY TO CHARGE ON APGIL 27 THAT IMPLICATION OF HALLORAN ARTICLE THAT GOJ WOULD NOT TAKE INITIATIVE IN INVITING PRESIDENT TO JAPAN AND INFERENCE THAT GOJ INDIFFERENT TO WHETHER PRESIDENT VISITS JAPAN OR NOT COMPLETELY BASELESS. OKAWARA EXPLAINED THAT FOREIGN MINISTER UNDOUBTEDLY HAD IN MIND THAT INVITATION TO PRESIDENT ALREADY EXTENDED  
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IN DECEMBER 1972 IN CONNECTION WITH DISCUSSION OF IMPERIAL VISIT ( SEE REFTEL) ALTHOUGH THIS FACT NOT YET MADE PUBLIC. OHIRA UNDOUBTEDLY FELT THAT TO MAKE THIS FACT PUBLIC AT THIS TIME WOULD ONLY INVOLVE QUESTION OF PRESIDENTIAL VISIT IN QTE UNEASY SITUATION UNQTE SURROUNDING POSTPONEMENT OF IMPERIAL VISIT. FURTHER, OKAWARA EXPLAINED, SINCE INVITATION ALREADY OUTSTANDING, OHIRA PROBABLY CONSIDERED THAT IT WOULD NOT BE PROPER, PARTICULARLY UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, FOR GOJ TO

APPEAR TO BE PRESSING PRESIDENT FOR ACCEPTANCE. EMBASSY  
CONSIDERS THAT OKAWARA'S EXPLANATION ENTIRELY PLAUSIBLE  
AND UNDERSTANDABLE IN JAPANESE CONTEXT AND THAT OHIRA'S  
INTENT UNDOUBTEDLY WAS TO AVOID ANY EMBARRASSMENT TO  
US. A CHECK WITH NUMBER OF OTHER AMERICAN CORRESPONDENTS  
AT INTERVIEW, MOREOVER, HAS REVEALED THAT THEY FELT  
HALLORAN HAD READ CONSIDERABLY MORE INTO OHIRA'S REMARKS THAN WAS  
THERE. WE SUSPECT HALLORAN PROBABLY HAD HIS STORY LINE EVEN BEFORE  
HE HEARD OHIRA'S EXPLANATIONS.  
SHOESMITH

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NMAFVVZCZ

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